**Working Hours of SBI**

2202. PROF. I.G. SANADI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether office timings in the branches of the State Bank of India, Local Head Office, New Delhi are from 10.00 A.M. to 5.00 P.M;

(b) whether many award staff in the SBI branches do not sit after banking hours;

(c) whether audit team from the State Bank Central Office, Bombay, while inspecting the SBI; Overseas Branch, New Delhi, have clearly pointed out about this drawback in their audit report and have issued strict instructions for enforcing discipline; and

(d) if so, the steps management has taken to implement the same in all the branches of SBI, whether the management is finding it difficult to enforce because of the union's resistance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (DR. DEBI PROSAD PAL): (a) According to State Bank of India (SBI), the office timings of award staff (clerical) working at various branches in Delhi are 9.45 A.M. to 4.45 P.M. However, for administrative offices, the office timings are 10.00 A.M. to 5.00 P.M.

(b) Punctuality of office hours is generally being observed.

(c) and (d) The Audit team from SBI, Central Office, Bombay had observed that the punctuality and attendance needs improvement. The Management of the concerned branch has taken corrective measures to ensure compliance of office timings. There is no resistance from award staff union to the observance of Office timings.

**Opening of New Branches of Commercial Banks during Eighth Plan period**

2203. SHRI SARADA MOHANTY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for opening of the branches of different commercial banks in the country during the Eighth Plan period; and

(b) the State-wise, bank-wise year-wise details of achievements made thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (DR. DEBI PROSAD PAL): (a) Under the extant policy of Reserve Bank of India (RBI), it is left to the judgement of commercial banks to open branches, after assessing the need therefor. The proposals for opening of the branches identified by the banks at centres/villages, which are recommended by State Governments are considered by the RBI on merits. In view of the freedom given to banks, no target has been fixed for branch expansion programme. Further, banks are allowed to open service branches and specialised branches namely, Industrial Finance, Overseas, NRI and SIB/SSI branches without the prior approval of RBI.

(b) The State-wise, bank-wise and year-wise details of bank branches as on 31.3.1992, 31.3.1993, 31.3.1994 and 31.3.1995 are given in the enclosed statements I and II.